



Episcopal Government.

A

SERMON

Preached at the Consecration

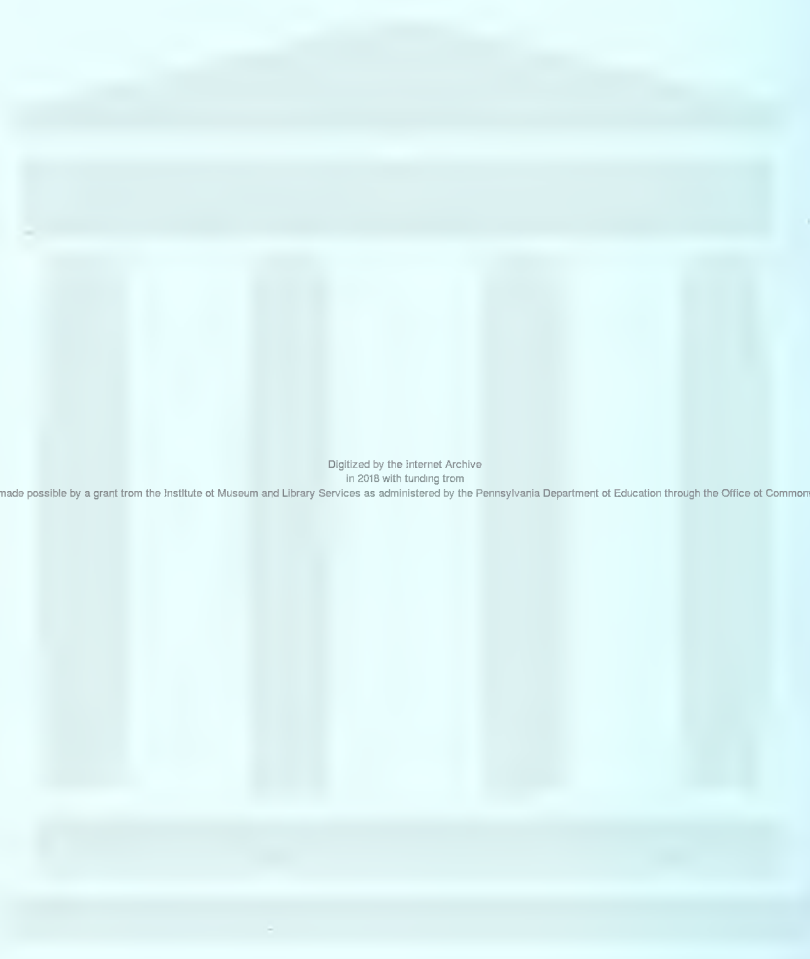
OF THE

Bishop of Pennsylvania,

BY THE

BISHOP OF VERMONT.





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EPISCOPAL GOVERNMENT.

A SERMON

Preached at the Consecration of the

REV. ALONZO POTTER, D.D.,

AS BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA ;

BY THE

RT. REV. JOHN HENRY HOPKINS, D.D.,

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT :

In Christ Church, Philadelphia, on Tuesday, September 23d, A. D. 1845.

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1845.

ALMIGHTY GOD, WHO
BY THY SON JESUS
CHRIST DIDST GIVE
TO THY HOLY APOS-
TLES MANY EXCELLENT
GIFTS, AND DIDST CHARGE THEM TO FEED
THY FLOCKS; GIVE GRACE, WE BESEECH
THEE, TO ALL BISHOPS, THE PASTORS OF
THY CHURCH, THAT THEY MAY DILIGENTLY
PREACH THY WORD,
AND DULY ADMINISTER
THE GODLY DISCIPLINE
THEREOF; AND GRANT
TO THE PEOPLE, THAT
THEY MAY OBEDIENT-
LY FOLLOW THE SAME;
THAT ALL MAY RE-
CEIVE THE CROWN OF
EVERLASTING GLORY,
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
OUR LORD.—AMEN.

SERMON.

1 TIMOTHY, iii. 4, 5.

“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?”

How naturally, my brethren, do this consecrated place and the occasion which has assembled us together, recall to our minds that venerable man, who, as the first Bishop of Pennsylvania, and one of the chief founders of our episcopacy, went in and out among us during so many years of edifying and instructive intercourse! His consistent firmness, united with kindly moderation, his simple and unaffected manner, his pure and upright life, his cheerful gravity, his eminent wisdom, his ready benevolence, his peculiar gentleness, all united to form a combination of solid and admirable qualities which none who ever knew him could doubt or question. And as they stood embodied, in his erect figure, his face of pale and spiritual serenity, his silvery locks, his eye of placid observation, and the mild and quiet majesty of meekness which surrounded him,—is there one amongst us that ever failed to behold in him a successor of the holy Apostles, not only in office but in character?—one of those rare instances of men who “give no offence in anything that the ministry be

not blamed"—a prudent counsellor, a true defender of the faith, a pillar of the Church, and a bulwark of his brethren.

But we may not dwell any longer on this theme, however grateful to our feelings. Let us rather pass on to consider the attributes of that solemn and awfully responsible office, which he discharged with such a singular measure of acceptance. Instead of indulging the murmuring spirit of selfish regret, that the glorious Lord of the harvest has seen fit to call home his faithful steward, after the toils and labors of his long and useful life; let us thank God for the benefit of his example, and take courage in the hope, that the same mighty power of divine grace will be manifested in not a few of his brethren and successors; so that the path of the Church, though obscured from time to time by passing clouds of human error and infirmity, shall yet be like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The special topic that I have selected, my brethren, has been chosen partly from my desire to avoid those familiar trains of thought which have been of late years presented to us with increasing frequency, and with a higher measure of ability than your preacher can justly claim. But yet I should deprecate the conclusion that their importance has been over-rated. The divine authority of the episcopal system, so clearly demonstrated in the promise of the blessed Redeemer to his apostles, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world,"—the succession which has brought down their office to our own day in one unbroken line, and by virtue of which our own ecclesiastical polity maintains its apostolic title—the plain rule established for the administration of ordination and government, by those and those alone who stand in the rank of this succession, so that it is impossible for us

consistently to acknowledge Holy Orders or the office of the Priesthood in the Church, except it be according to the apostolic law which Christ appointed,—these are matters on which I design not to enlarge, only because I take it for granted that there is but one mind amongst us concerning them, and that they have moreover become so familiar through the active agencies of the pulpit and the press, within the last few years, that the doctrine of the Church in these respects can hardly be mistaken.

There is also another, and a truly inexhaustible range of subjects, suggested by the epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, and beautifully embodied in our Consecration-office, on which I shall say but little ; although I should feel it to be a most uncharitable inference that I could be supposed to doubt their sacred force of obligation. That a bishop, solemnly consecrated to feed and govern the flock of Christ, the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, should be blameless, and vigilant, and sober, and of irreproachable life and conversation,—that he should be hospitable, well qualified or apt to teach, strictly temperate, habitually meek, liberal to the extent of his means, gentle, affectionate, zealous, a lover of peace, in a word, an example of every christian quality, who can doubt? On these parts of practical episcopacy, whatever the defects of our performance may be, there never was any question about the theory of our duty. Nor is there much danger of forgetting these topics, so long as we are surrounded by such multitudes of our sectarian friends—friends, surely, if in nothing else, yet in that most difficult and important part of friendship which reminds us continually of our faults. Neither is this our only monitor, for the world itself praises these parts of a bishop's character, and is sufficiently prompt and stern

in its judgment upon any man who is greatly deficient in them. For in truth, they are matters which belong equally to the consistency of every professing christian, and they only rise in their prominence when we are treating of bishops, because the superiority of their office, and the comparative smallness of their number, place them in bolder relief before the public eye; and therefore their virtues and their sins exert a wider influence upon the Church, either for good or for evil, by reason of their being held up to a more keen and universal observation.

Giving then, to both these classes of subjects, nothing more than a brief and passing notice, my main design is to enlarge on the peculiar duty of the episcopal office, in that respect most rarely mentioned, most slightly considered, and most apt to be confessed as a principle of by-gone days, which the present state of the Church and the world renders totally impracticable. I mean, my beloved brethren, the duty of government, so forcibly enjoined by the apostle in the text, where he requires the bishop to be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity, adding withal this pointed argument:—"For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God? Here, therefore, we have a topic comparatively fresh, even in the nineteenth century, because it has been laid up so long amongst obsolete notions, and is unpopular, unedifying, unwelcome, for the most part, even amongst churchmen themselves. The age in which we live, while it ridicules the existence of all other spectres, is constantly on the watch for the ghost of power. In its claim of might, our age is democratic, because there is no appeal of any practical force except it secure a majority of votes. In its claim of

right, it is a kind of autocracy, because every one denounces government when it interferes with his own liberty, and makes it a point of conscience to contend for whatever seems right in his own eyes. So that the idea of power in the office of a bishop, seems, to the common judgment of even churchmen themselves, to have neither right nor might to justify it, and therefore they are exceedingly apt to conclude, that the less there is said about it, the better.

But no modern expediency; no popular prejudice, no supposed impossibility, will ever make these notions consist with our acknowledged principles. Why do we cling to episcopacy at all, unless it be that the authority of Christ has established it as the mode in which his Church shall be governed? Why do we insist that none but the bishops can ordain, unless it be that such is plainly their exclusive right as the successors of the apostles? But is not the duty of government as distinctly apostolic as the duty of ordination? And if the Church in these days is at liberty to let go the one, are we not equally at liberty to let go the other? And if the episcopal right to ordain the ministry in the Church of Christ cannot be destroyed without incurring the awful sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and laying a sacrilegious hand upon the ark of God, how shall the equally episcopal right to govern, be cast down and trampled under foot, without an equal amount of guilt and profanation?

You will not understand me, brethren, as here speaking of any but our own branch of the Church universal. With regard to those who discard episcopacy altogether, as an anti-christian usurpation, we have only to remember the compassionate spirit of the Redeemer's prayer, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do;" and in the

language of our sacred Litany, implore Him to pardon our enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and to turn their hearts. But for the Church herself it is quite another matter. We hold ourselves bound by the plain authority of Scripture. We acknowledge the bishop to be a ruler and a governor in the direct language of the Ordinal. We follow the primitive Church in demanding from every deacon and priest at the time of their ordination a solemn vow of obedience to their bishop, which forms the most distinct proof of our doctrine that the bishop is designed to govern, and that the ministry itself, in some sense, are bound to obey. Few questions, then, are of more practical importance than this: What is the true character and extent of episcopal government? for on this will depend the correlative question, viz: What is the true character and extent of the obedience which the ordination vow requires? I may not succeed, my brethren, in the attempt to answer these questions with the clearness and cogency which might be desirable; but I trust that the effort will not be altogether either uninteresting or unsatisfactory. To give the greater method to my argument, I shall first examine the law of episcopal government, and secondly the manner and spirit of its administration.

1. The law of the episcopate may be readily ascertained by a little sound reflection upon the nature of the office. It is the office of an overseer, or superintendent in the Church of Christ, appointed specially to watch over a particular district or diocese, and generally to take a proper share in all questions which involve the welfare of the whole. Of course the bishop's powers are ecclesiastical: they are conferred for the sake of the Church, they are limited to the objects of the Church, and have no proper connexion with any secular

interests or worldly polity. Hence, in the case of our mother Church of England, although the bishops are lords of Parliament, forming a portion of the standing legislature of the land, and called to act upon all ordinary questions of earthly policy, like the other temporal peers, yet this duty is only tied down upon them by the peculiar constitution of that country. It has no real title to be considered a part of their office as bishops. Such a temporal lordship was not derived to them from the apostles, nor can they transmit it by ordination, nor is there one word respecting it in the English Ordinal. It is purely of a temporal and political nature. The State conferred it and the State may take it away, and therefore it has nothing to do with episcopacy in itself, but is a mere accident of the Church in its relation to the State, by virtue of the peculiar arrangement of the British constitution.

2. But if the bishop be thus shown to be an overseer or superintendent of the Church, a chief officer in that kingdom which is not of this world, it follows, in the second place, that he must be limited in the discharge of his office by the objects for which he is consecrated, viz: the administration of the will of Christ, whose servant he is, and the promotion of the welfare of that Church which is the body and spouse of the Redeemer. Hence he can have no license, as bishop, to run counter to the precepts of his divine Master. He can have no authority, as bishop, to injure, weaken, or divide the Church which he was appointed to defend. And therefore, though he be a ruler, yet he is not an arbitrary ruler. Though he be a judge, yet he is not a supreme judge. And not only is he amenable to his celestial Sovereign, the Bishop and Shepherd of souls, for every act of mal-administration, but

he is also amenable to the judgment of his episcopal brethren, and may always, by a regular process, be brought before the tribunal of his peers, if he transcends the due limits of his official authority.

3. And this brings us, in the third place, to consider the constituted rules of episcopal decision, all of which must be found within the circle of ecclesiastical law ; for the judges of the Church, like the judges of the land, have no right to make, nor alter, nor abrogate the law at their pleasure. Neither have they any right to despise or depart from precedent, although they have a right to correct the mistakes of their predecessors, provided they be sustained by the word of God, the supreme lawgiver, and by the better decisions of the Church in those earlier ages which lay nearest to the apostolic day.

But here it may be asked whether we are bound by the ecclesiastical law any farther than our own canons have adopted and enforced it. And the answer is easily given, if we consider the kindred question of temporal law, as administered by the judges of earthly courts. Thus the secular judge is bound, in the first place, by the law of his own State, unless it be clearly unconstitutional. But beside the acts of our legislatures, every part of our land recognizes the English common-law, and also sundry acts of the English parliament, so far as they were actually in use before the revolution, and suitable to the situation of the country. Nor is this all : for the old civil law of the Roman empire is in force to a certain extent in those parts of the Union which were originally civilized by France and Spain, and the proceedings in the maritime and chancery jurisdictions are governed to some extent by the same law, from Maine to Florida ; so that a

well furnished judge of our secular courts is not only obliged to be acquainted with the acts of the local legislature, but more or less with the laws of the whole civilized world, at least from the era of the emperor Justinian. And if such an officer should presume to discard the whole of this, under the idea that he was not bound by any laws except those which could be shown upon the statute book of his own State, and of the Union, it is not to be doubted that universal ridicule and scorn would be the just reward of his ignorance and presumption.

Now if this be manifestly true of the judges of our secular courts, how much more will the principle apply to the office of a bishop, who belongs to that Church which is catholic or universal, and traces up his authority to the very apostles themselves, and is bound to discharge it, to the utmost of his power, according to those laws which are the best exponents of the will of God, being received and revered from the earliest ages by the consent of all who have been before him. Hence, while our bishops are clearly obliged to assign the first rank to the canons of our American Church, yet are they also obliged, if need be, to look beyond them to the law of our mother Church of England, and beyond that, to hold in due respect the canons of the ancient Church, especially those of the first four œcumenical or general Councils, the decisions of which were always acknowledged to be of paramount authority. For just so long as he is guided by the true and established principles of the Gospel, as laid down and expounded by the wisdom of the past, so long and no longer can he be sure of avoiding the unknown perils of novelty,—so long and no longer can the Church, in all circumstances, be safe under his administration.

Hence it would appear that the bishop has no power committed to him for the purpose of inventing, originating, or altering the laws of the Church. He is, on the contrary, to decide within the circle of authority fixed by others than himself. Of this authority, indeed, the Word of God is supreme and omnipotent; but yet the bishop must so expound and apply it, that he conflict not with the canons of the Church, for otherwise he becomes the introducer of novelties, and may open the door of strife and confusion, if not of actual heresy or schism. But so long as he confines himself within this safe limit, his office will always be found of the highest use. Peace and order, unity and concord, sound discipline and purity, will wait on his decisions; and the ruling power will be, not the will or caprice or fancy of the bishop, but the law of the Church; of which he is only the constituted organ.

4. From all that has been said, the duty of the clergy to their bishop may be readily inferred, for their vows of obedience being given to him only in his official capacity, they do not and cannot be held to bind, when the bishop transcends his proper circle. For then he becomes a transgressor, and ceasing to pay respect to his own vows, he cannot lawfully demand that obedience which was only promised on the supposition that the bishop himself should be obedient to the Church, according to the commands of her divine Lord and Master. And therefore, as Archbishop Potter has well expressed it in his excellent work on Church Government, (p. 120,) while those who disobey their bishop and separate from him without just cause, are guilty of schism, which is one of the greatest crimes of which a christian can be guilty, yet it is a duty to separate from a sinful bishop. "For this reason,"

he adds, "heretical bishops were usually deserted by their flocks."—"Hence, the proceedings of those presbyters who withdrew from Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople, upon his introducing heretical doctrines, were approved by the great council of Ephesus; and the general council of Constantinople lays down this rule, that whoever separates from such as publicly teach heresy in the Church, even before they are synodically condemned, are not guilty of schism, but maintain the unity of the Church from schisms, by condemning not a bishop, but a false bishop and a false teacher."

But in order to apply this important principle correctly, it is perfectly obvious that there must be some ultimate tribunal to decide every point in controversy; for otherwise there would be no authority in the bishop's office which a discontented or wilful presbyter might not constantly oppose, on the plea that he was right and the bishop was wrong. Thus, in the case of a civil judge, however incorrect the parties and the advocates may think him, yet they can only get rid of his authority by taking a formal writ of error or appeal; and when the question is determined by the court of the highest resort, although the parties be still dissatisfied, yet they must submit: since otherwise there could be no end to controversy, and the voice of the law would become powerless and contemptible. And in like manner precisely, the authority of a bishop's decisions cannot be lawfully evaded, except by appealing from his judgment to the superior council, which we term the House of Bishops; for otherwise it is manifest that the powers of the Church must be utterly prostrated, and each man would be his own ecclesiastical judge, to all intents and purposes. A regular mode of taking this appeal, from the judgment of one bishop to the House of Bishops, would

therefore seem essential to our system. Without it, no argument can be necessary to show to a reflecting mind, that neither the just authority of the bishop on the one hand, nor the just rights of the presbyter on the other, can be properly sustained.

In support of these views, my brethren, we are able, with the utmost confidence, to invoke the testimony of all antiquity. There never was a period of the Church, where episcopacy was acknowledged, without acknowledging, at the same time, that the bishops were bound to govern; and that their government consisted in the exercise of the judicial function, with the right of appeal to the Council of bishops, when any man felt aggrieved by the judgment of his proper diocesan. And although our own branch of the Church has not yet completed her system in this respect, so as to be in accordance with the Scriptural doctrine and the universal practice of all Christendom, yet this is easily accounted for by the peculiar difficulties which attended our organization. Those difficulties, in the good Providence of God, exist no longer; and it depends upon ourselves, under divine favour, whether we shall complete the work so happily commenced, or transmit to our successors an imperfect and undefined system, under disadvantages which must increase with the growth of the Church from generation to generation.

Let us now proceed to test these principles by an appeal to the inspired law of the episcopate, as laid down by the great apostle in his epistle to Timothy, the first bishop of Ephesus.

“Against an elder,” that is a presbyter, saith he, “receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses. As many as sin, rebuke before all, that others may hear and fear.”

Now here we have an apostolic mandate, delivered to the bishop. It was he who must receive the accusation, he who must decide upon its truth, and he who must declare the sentence. All this he was bound to perform in public and officially. There must be two or three witnesses to his formal acceptance of the accusation, and his judgment must be pronounced "before all, that others might hear and fear." These are the very attributes of the judicial functions. The private Christian may receive an accusation, and may go and expostulate with his offending brother alone. And such is indeed his duty, according to the text, "Thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him." But the public reception of a charge, the authoritative call to answer, and the decision in the face of the Church by which others are to take warning, are plainly matters of official and judicial character, and can only be rightfully discharged by him who holds the office of a judge in the house of God.

The same inference must be drawn from the precepts of St. Paul to Titus, the first bishop of Crete. For he speaks of "certain vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped." "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition," saith the apostle, "reject." "Rebuke with all authority," saith he again: "Let no man despise thee." Now all this puts us again upon the judicial function. For Titus could not stop the mouth of vain talkers and deceivers, until they had been openly convicted upon trial; nor could he reject the heretic after the first and second admonition, unless he had official power to cite and to condemn; nor could he rebuke with authority, unless he possessed an authoritative right to pronounce a binding sentence. Nothing, therefore, can be more clear than the evidence of Scripture upon the

judicial character of the bishop's office. And when we add the practical construction of the whole Church from the apostolic era to our own day, without a single doubt arising upon the subject throughout the entire range of ecclesiastical history, we confess ourselves at a loss to imagine how intelligent and reflecting episcopalians can have the slightest difficulty upon the subject.

Lastly, we recur to the language of the text, where the apostle declares that a bishop must be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" Here we have the patriarchal character of the episcopal office, from which the bishop's title, "Reverend Father in God," is confessedly derived. And we have the same principle of judicial government, sustained by analogy with the parental relation, and therefore commended to us at once in its strongest and its most endearing form.

True, indeed, it is, that in our age and country, the analogy of the apostle might yield but little aid to the establishment of any principle of government; since the popular feeling of the day is seldom favourable to the ruling well our own house, having our children in subjection with all gravity. In the judgment of very many, domestic government itself is totally out of the question; and he that should insist upon his duty as a husband and a father in this particular, would be styled despotic and tyrannical by the common sentiment of multitudes, who think the spirit of the age a noble improvement upon the antiquated maxims of the Bible.

But to us, my brethren, who at least profess allegiance to the Word of God, the argument is not to be thus evaded.

For the text commences by laying down the requisition that a bishop shall rule his own house well, having his children in subjection with all gravity, and the analogy is then presented in the form of a question; "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" By this connexion it is indisputably plain, that the apostle would have rejected from the episcopal office every husband and father, who did not govern his own house, and keep his children in subjection, on the very ground that the man who could not act as judge and ruler in the small circle of his own family, could never be expected to discharge a similar office in the enlarged and far more difficult sphere of episcopal duty.

In the light of this strong and comprehensive analogy, therefore, let us contemplate the spirit in which the obligations of the bishop should be fulfilled. And we shall find it to be indeed expressive, not only of all that is most sacred in human government, but of all that is most zealous, most pure, most devoted, most disinterested, and most affectionate; so that no idea of the office can be imagined, which is so well adapted to engage the assent of every intellect, and the confidence of every heart.

For look, I beseech you, brethren, at the christian father labouring for his family. See how he toils in season and out of season, for their maintenance and support. Is he a husbandman? Behold him subduing the sturdy forest, breaking up the stubborn soil, enduring the summer's heat and the winter's frost, and looking for his reward in the hope that his children will enjoy the harvest. Is he a seaman? Behold him braving the perils of the deep, self-banished for months or years from the comforts of his home, and only sustained by

the hope that his gains will make that home more happy. Is he a merchant? a scholar? or a servant of the State? No matter what he is, if he be a christian parent, his strongest earthly anxieties, his warmest affections, his most energetic efforts, his most persevering toils, are concentrated upon the welfare of his children. O how does this simple recurrence to the labours of a father teach us the zeal with which an apostolic bishop should labour for the Church of God!

Or look at the christian parent, providing for the instruction of his family. How willing he is to strain his means to the utmost, lest the education of his children should suffer. How careful he is to select for them the best conducted schools and the most faithful teachers. If any cause of complaint arise, how promptly he investigates its truth, and seeks for a remedy. And when he adds his own counsels and instructions, how clearly he enforces—how affectionately he impresses them upon his children; and how his heart yearns with intense desire that their future lives may be such as to approve his care. And may we not here, again, discern a strong analogy for the preaching and instruction, which the bishop should strive to furnish for the flock committed to his stewardship?

Or look at the father hanging over the sick-bed of his child. How patiently and tenderly he nurses the feeble frame. How kindly he administers the distasteful medicine. How diligently he seeks for the best physician, and with what punctual exactness he follows the prescription from which he hopes for a cure. May we not here again derive a lesson for the compassionate and watchful spirit of a bishop, when he contemplates the diseases of the Church, or approaches the disorders of a single soul amongst his people?

Thirdly, however, we would look upon the christian father, in the aspect more especially noted in our text, when called to administer discipline, and keep his children in subjection with all gravity. Should he trifle with this most solemn and difficult portion of his parental duty? Should he shrink from it through fear, or suffer his mind to be warped by partiality? Should he close his ears against complaints lest a favourite son should suffer, or place in jeopardy the safety of his whole household, sooner than rebuke the delinquency of one? Rather should he not rise up with the authority which the Lord has committed to his hand, judge the wrong-doer without respect of persons, and thus vindicate the laws of God, give warning to the rest lest they presume on the impunity of the offender, and bring the culprit himself to a wholesome repentance before it be too late? Surely in this, also, we may see a true analogy to the office of a bishop. When the exercise of his judicial function becomes necessary, he too must endeavour to fulfil it without fear or false indulgence, however painful and trying the task may be. He must not presume to indulge the faults of one to the hazard of all, nor seek to evade, for the sake of his present ease, that solemn work of discipline, without which it is impossible, rightly and scripturally, to take care of the Church of God.

And now let us consider the *influence* which a christian father would desire to establish over his family. For we must always remember that *authority* and *influence* are different things, and do not necessarily go together. Authority is official, influence is personal. Every officer of the commonwealth, every governor and judge, every father, who, in his own family, is both governor and judge, must have authority; because his official relations require and define this very thing.

But influence belongs to the character of men independent of official relations, and by it, chiefly, it is, that they are able to operate effectually on the character of those around them. Thus a judge has a certain official authority as judge, whether he be a good man or an evil one. If the community respect him for his virtues and his talents, then his influence as a man will be added to his authority as a judge, and both together will enlarge, to a wide extent, his sphere of usefulness. But if he be of an opposite character, doubtful in morals, degraded in habits, or offensive in his mode of personal intercourse, the influence produced will be quite of contrary description. For the dislike to him as a man, will even beget a disposition to censure him as an officer, and the prejudice thus created will magnify his slightest errors, while far more serious mistakes in one who was generally beloved, might be kindly excused and speedily forgotten.

And a father, in a far more extended sense, is often made to feel the difference between influence and authority. The right to be the governor and judge of his family indeed belongs to him, but if that family does not respect and love him for his moral worth and amiable manner, he will find that the influence is in other hands, and is often so strong as to set at naught the whole weight of his parental authority. And the reason is easily assigned, why authority is so seldom able to contend against influence. It is because authority addresses itself only to the judgment, while influence appeals directly to the heart. But when the judgment is alone upon the one side, and the feelings or affections are on the other, who is so foolish as to doubt the result? For first we must remember that the whole human family, whatever may be the age, the sex, the rank, or the education, are abundantly endowed with these

feelings or affections, while very few, comparatively, have judgment in an equal proportion. And next we must take into consideration that the judgment is not the motive power with any one. The impulse to all our actions must be found in the heart. The mind may be able to investigate and ready to decide, but it is feeling which executes. And therefore parental *authority* can never hope for its true result, unless it be associated with parental *influence*, for when the family do not love and confide in him whom they call father, all his parental power must be exercised in the midst of opposition and difficulty, if, indeed, it can be exercised at all.

Now all this bears a close and true analogy to the office of a bishop in the Church of God. It is not possible for him to administer his arduous duties with success, unless his *influence* be such as to strengthen his *authority*. On this part of the question, every thing he does, every thing he says, the least point and particle of his official and personal example, is invested with more or less importance. His diocese should respect his talents and his learning; but above all, they must confide in his doctrinal soundness, his moral integrity and his purity; they must honor his virtues, they must believe that he loves his Church with zealous affection, they must regard him as habitually under divine and holy motives and affections, as a man of prayer, of charity, and of devotion—in a word, they should be ready to apply to him the description which the inspired evangelist has recorded of St. Barnabas, that he “was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost.” And then the exercise of episcopal authority, going hand in hand with this kindly and sacred influence—like the exercise of parental authority by a father whom his children reverence and love—will be found, indeed, a bond of unity and peace, of harmony

and affection, a living demonstration of the wisdom of God in providing such a government for his Church, and a practical testimony which none could gainsay, of the happiness of those who enjoyed its superior privileges.

In contemplating, my brethren, this very slight and imperfect description of a christian bishop, I am far from supposing that any of you will accuse me of undue partiality to the practical comment furnished by ourselves. Sure I am that I do but speak the universal sentiment of my colleagues, when I say that none of us considers himself sufficient for these things, that we are all compassed by infirmity, that in the practical working of these high and holy principles, we confess our ample share in the degeneracy which the Church of these latter days exhibits in every department, when we compare her with the apostolic and primitive pattern. But shall we lower the standard of the Word of God, in order to palliate our own deficiencies? Shall we disguise or distort the Scriptural features of a holy institution, because our own countenance reflects them so imperfectly? Shall the doctrine of episcopacy be warped from its divine truth, because the modern practice of episcopacy fails to manifest its beauty and its power? O no! Sooner let the tongue of your preachers cleave to the roof of their mouth, than have them incur the awful sin of adulterating the testimony of their Lord and Master. Rather let us fix our eyes steadfastly upon the sacred model which his wisdom has established, with the humble confession of our own unworthiness, and the earnest, deep and heartfelt prayer that the omnipotent Redeemer, who is the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, may pour out upon us all the abundant influence of the Holy Spirit, and grant that each successive addition to our order may carry higher

and yet higher the practical character of its institution, until the love of his truth shall cover the earth, and the whole world be filled with his glory.

To you, my long-known and beloved brother,* whose election to be the bishop of this extensive and powerful diocese has called forth so strong and general an expression of the Church's approbation and gratitude to God, I can say nothing, I am sure, which is at all likely to strengthen your own profound sense of the responsibility of the office, the importance of its duties, and the oppressive burden of its cares. Twice, already, have you declined what worldly minds esteem the honour and the dignity of the episcopate. And knowing, as we all know, the strength of the habits and the feelings which must needs have opposed so entire a change in your sphere of labour, we cannot for a moment doubt that your acceptance has been an act of self-denial, performed with a single eye to the approbation of your Divine Master.

When, to this interesting peculiarity of the occasion, we add the history of the convention which elected you, and behold a result which no man could have anticipated, indicating, with no common clearness, the overruling hand of Divine Providence, and melting down all the existing barriers to unanimity, in one harmonious agreement of the whole,—when we look back and consider the agitation and ferment of the last few years, and think of the dangers which seemed to menace our unity, and try to estimate the value, to all our dearest interests, of such a bishop as the strange condition of the Church required,—when we look forward, and reflect upon the influence for good which we humbly trust the blessing of the Most High will vouchsafe to your instrumentality—

* Here the Bishop-Elect arose.

O, my brother ! it is easier to feel than to describe the importance which marks this day in the records of our Church's history.

May He, the Almighty King who has called you to this office, endow you richly with every grace needed for its administration. May you have boldness without temerity, firmness without obstinacy, zeal without rashness, and meekness without fear. May the spirit of prayer keep your heart in constant communion with the Holy One of Israel, and bring down upon all your ministrations the blessings of his love. May our brethren who united in your election, be always united in sustaining you. And may you and they go forward in the cause and in the strength of God, until you shall all be enabled to render up your stewardship, and receive the gracious sentence, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

And now, to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, dominion and praise, world without end.—AMEN.